

## Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 OES-03 PC-01 USIA-06

INR-07 DODE-00 AGR-05 INT-05 COME-00 SR-02 ORM-01

/118 W

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R 091540Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 410

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NIAMEY 1347

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, ML, NG

SUBJ: AFDROUGHT: MALIAN REFUGEES IN NIGER

REF: A. STATE 68884 NOTAL; B. BAMAKO 1207 NOTAL; C. NIAMEY 975

1. CHECKS WITH RELEVANT GON OFFICIALS AND FRENCH SOURCES  
FORMERLY WORKING AT LAZARET CAMP REVEAL FOLLOWING REGARDING  
STATUS OF MALIAN REFUGEES IN NIGER:

A. GON HAS OFFICIALLY CLOSED LAZARET CAMP AND HAS ASKED  
UNDP AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES TO DISCONTINUE ALL  
DISTRIBUTION OF FOODS AND MEDICINES TO CAMP.

B. IN JANUARY-FEBRUARY PERIOD, MALIAN TUAREG POPULATION  
AT CAMP ESTIMATED AT ABOUT 6,000 AND GROWING. IN LAST SIX  
WEEKS, SEVERAL CONVOYS OF MALIAN MILITARY TRUCKS HAVE  
EVACUATED THESE REFUGEES BACK TO MALI. WE HAVE OBSERVED  
SOME OF THESE CONVOYS ON ROADS NORTH OF NIAMEY AND CAN  
CONFIRM THIS MOVEMENT. GON ESTIMATES THAT MALIANS HAD  
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REPATRIATED ABOUT 4,000 TUAREGS WITH ANOTHER 2,000

MELTING INTO COUNTRYSIDE AS WORD GOT OUT THAT MALIANS WERE COMING. SO FAR VERY FEW MALIAN NOMADS HAVE BEEN OBSERVED AROUND FOOD DISTRIBUTION CENTERS BUT THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT THEY ARE SENDING THEIR CHILDREN TO TOWN ON MARKET DAYS FOR SUPPLIES.

C. ON QUESTION OF DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN NEW AND OLD REFUGEES FROM MALI, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN PRECISE FIGURES AS TO THE FREQUENT MOVEMENT OF NOMADS BACK AND FORTH BUT GOV OFFICIALS ASSERT THAT QUOTE SEVERAL HUNDRED REPATRIATED MALIANS HAVE ALREADY DRIFTED BACK UNQUOTE. WE DOUBT WE WILL EVER GET CLEAR PICTURE OF THIS SITUATION WHICH IS COMPLICATED BY FACT NIGERIAN OFFICIALS ARE CURRENTLY TRYING TO MOVE THEIR OWN NOMADS FROM SOUTH WHERE SOME HAVE MIGRATED TO THEIR MORE TRADITIONAL HAUNTS IN NORTH NIGER NEAR MALI BORDER.

D. APPROXIMATELY A THOUSAND MALIAN TUAREGS ARE WORKING IN NIAMEY. THESE ARE PREDOMINANTLY MEN WHOSE FAMILIES ARE IN COUNTRYSIDE OR HAVE RETURNED TO MALI. IN RESPONSE TO MALIAN CALL, HANDFUL RETURNED TO MALI BUT VAST MAJORITY SEEM TO PREFER WORKING IN NIAMEY TO UNCERTAIN FUTURE IN MALI. HECK

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## Message Attributes

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